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State fund
guardian

June 1995

Golf Outing

Get your clubs out!! The annual State Fund Golf Tournament will be held on Friday, July 7th at the Bill Roberts Golf Course.

Tee times will begin at 12 noon, so call Dave Miller to reserve your "lucky" space. Spouses are welcome to join in the fun.

Teams for the scramble will consist of four people—everyone will play off the team's best shot.

There will be dinner afterwards along with prizes. The cost is $25 per person for dinner and golf.

New Baby

Former State Fund employee Jody Neary and her husband John are the proud parents of new baby boy born on June 4th. He weighed 9 lb. 9 oz. and his name is Colton McCay.

Jeff, MIS, was the winner of the "Baby pool," he guessed the correct date and closest time of day.

State Government Considers Privatizing

The Governors' office has requested that each state agency investigate potential operations that could be moved into or assisted by the private sector.

A list of recommendations will be presented to the Governor in the near future and all suggestions will be carefully considered.

Governor Racicot has talked openly about his plan to privatize more state government functions and will be inventorying government operation and services.

Some areas of potential privatization include:

- the state's liquor business
- part of the state lottery
- the state motor fleet
- institutional food services
- highway designs, and
- printing and mailing operations

If you have suggestions as to how we could move some of our operations to the private sector, please contact Aidan Myhre.

Customer Commentary

MCO Success

The University of Montana, the alma mater for some of you, is one of our largest policyholders that has experienced tremendous success with managed care.

Gordon Opel of UM, says he appreciates all that the MCO in Missoula offers. "The MCO assists in getting injured workers back to work, while at the same time employees are receiving quality medical care."

He also says that the response time and the information provided by the MCO are impressive!

New Feature

With 250 employees here at the State Fund it's hard to get to know everyone and what they do. So, we have added a new feature to the *Guardian* called Profiles. Each month a different department or unit will be featured.

This month we start with the Medical Pay Unit of the Claim Department. This unit has nine staff and is located on the second floor on the north side of the building. See inside for more about the people who work in the Med Pay Unit.

We hope you enjoy this new feature and can maybe now put some names to faces.

Thanks for Sharing

Thank you for sharing your opinions of the *Guardian* with us last month—we want employees to continue to share your opinions and ideas for articles.

The responses of the reader survey indicate more department information and insight about operational changes would make interesting reading.

Some other ideas that were mentioned include: explanation of department configuration and function, the economy of Montana, and information about other States' Funds.

There also seems to be curiosity about our customers. As a result, you will notice a new addition to the *Guardian*, "Customer Commentary." This feature will include customer's comments about the State Fund—sometimes good...sometimes not so good.

State Fund attorney, Dan Whyte was married to Shawn Bishop-Walker on May 27th. Congratulations Dan!

Published monthly for and by the employees of the Montana State Fund.

The Trainer Knocks!

Opportunities for Personal and Professional Development

Well. . .the Trainer has been out of the network for a while, so we need to do some catching up! First off, we need to recognize the graduates of the "Essentials of Management" class completed in late April. Ed Binkley, Shawn Bubb, Wayne Dillavou, Sam Heigh, Butch Loftsgaarden, Cris McCoy, Karen Miser, Aidan Myhre, Jim Nell, Joanne Romasko, Larry Thomas, Laurie Weidlich, and John Wilkins are due a pat on the back. Sorry we missed you folks earlier! Dwight Barnard, Myrna Hammond, Nancy O'Dell, and Jim Grigsby completed the Helena College of Technology "Introduction to Microcomputers" course in May. Watch those fingers fly now! Wanda Person recently completed an update seminar titled, "How to Better Organize, Control and Manage, Accounts Payable" from Padgett-Thompson. Congratulations to you all!!

I'm sure there are others of you who have completed courses we just don't know about. We'd enjoy celebrating your success with you. Please let me know so we can get your name in print.

Montana State Professional Development Center classes:

All Kidding Aside: Preventing Harassment
July 11
Working With Difficult People
July 27

State computer training at **Helena College of Technology**:

WordPerfect 6.1 for Windows
July 12 & 13
Lotus for Windows
July 19 & 20
Intro to Windows
July 20

The **Computer School**:

Intermediate WordPerfect for Windows
5 - 7pm, July 26 & 27 and Aug 1,2, & 3
Intermediate Lotus for Windows
9am - 12 noon, Aug 21, 22, &23
Intro to Lotus for Windows
5 - 7pm, Aug 23, 24, 29, 30, 31, and Sep 5
Basic Computer Literacy
9am - 12 noon, Aug 24 & 25
Windows Introduction
9am - 12 noon, Aug 30 & 31

Other Helena College of Technology opportunities will be available starting in late August. When we get the schedule we'll publish it.

Got an idea for training? Send your ideas, needs, suggestions to Frank via ZIP! or phone (9333) or leave a note!

Human Resources

Personnel changes since May 1, 1995.

New Hires

Valerie Bender, Claim
Donna Liedle, Claim
Terry Loftsgaarden, Claim
Wes Winden, Human Resources

Transfers

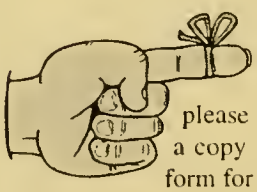
Laurie Weidlich, Claim

Departures

Susan Amicucci, Claim
Jodi Neary, MIS
Fred Shepherd, MIS
Judy Simpson, MIS

A Reminder...

...to all in-house job applicants.



When you apply for an in-house position, please remember to keep a copy of the application form for your records.

Thank you !

Tips for Better Customer Communication

- Take a real interest in each customer Use the customer's name in conversation.
- Make customers feel you really want to help—by being accessible. Give customers your direct-dial number and respond to your voice mail regularly.
- Avoid expressions and actions that make customers feel unappreciated. *Example*: Instead of saying, "That's not our policy," try to find a way to help.
- Solve problems quickly. Apologize when appropriate—and treat customer complaints with respect. Tell customers exactly what you plan to do to solve a problem.
- Double check anything that doesn't make sense or doesn't feel right. If you spot a potential problem, tell the customer immediately.
- Never promise what you can't deliver. If the customer wants something by a specific date, make sure it's realistic.

Source: *What Customers Really Want*, a video from the editors of *communication briefings*.

Kudos Korner

Kudos to Christy Weikart, Denise Molley, Mike Knect, and Lanny Hubbard

—congratulations team!

This team spent a lot of time preparing for the Berg Lumber trial that was held in Lewistown earlier this month. The teamwork resulted in a constructive fraud verdict and the State Fund won damages in the amount of $319,189.

Kudos to Chris Hauge

—dedicated staff!

Chris Hauge, MIS, worked on the new computer conversion process until 2:30 a.m. one Friday night. He and other MIS staff have worked long and hard on this project—they were all very dedicated to a smooth transition.

Profiles

Medical Pay Unit

Cathy French has been with the State Fund for almost nine months. Cathy researches and enters chiro and anesthesiology bills. She also helps out with pharmacy and hospital bills. Prior to this position she worked at Buttrey's for eight years as a customer service manager. She is married to Cal and has two children, Cameron and Callie. Cathy loves to hunt, fish and golf.

Cindy Gilbert has been at State Fund for almost four months. She works to ensure that pharmacy bills are researched and entered daily. Cindy also helps with other types of bills and fills in at the reception desk when help is needed. Before coming to State Fund, Cindy was a Customer Service Manager at WalMart for over two years. She graduated from Bozeman Senior High School and was a member of Bozeman Junior Achievement. Cindy is married to Blaine (he works in MIS) and they have two children, Matt is four and Jenna is three. She enjoys spending time with her family, the outdoors, and driving to new places.

Medical Pay Unit *Back: Marie Ringle, Donna Weber, Cindy Gilbert, Kathy Thompson, Harry Walker, Cathy French. Front: Juanita Hicklin, Deena Gunstone, Rita Potts.*

Deena Gunstone has been with the State Fund for nearly seven years. She enters medical bill information. She has previously worked at the Department of Motor Vehicles, Lewis & Clark County, Helena Police Department, various car dealers, and the IRS. Deena graduated from Helena High, attended Helena Vo-Tech and has taken courses at the Computer School and the Adult Learning Center. Deena is single and has one sister, two half sisters, five step-sisters, two half brothers, and one step-brother. Her hobbies include reading and collecting rocks and teddy bears.

Juanita Hicklin has been the Data Entry Supervisor for the Medical Pay Unit for almost two years and has worked for the State Fund for six years. In her job, Juanita processes all transfers and refunds from providers and claimants and contacts providers when necessary. She makes sure all batches are entered and balanced daily and researches procedure and diagnostic codes when needed. She also trys to keep eight data entry operators "on the straight and narrow." Juanita has previously worked at local banks in several positions—teller, proof department, and head teller/supervisor. Juanita said she has one husband who's still hanging in there after 35 years. She has three children and three terrific grandchildren. She enjoys spending time with her family and spoiling the grandkids. Her hobbies inclue cross-stitch, wood crafts, and watching the kids' baseball games.

Rita Potts has been with the State Fund for eight years. Her responsibilities include encoding and entry of hospital bills and knowledge of all other types of bills entered in the unit. Rita has previously worked as a payroll clerk and data entry operator at several different state agencies. Rita has a family of four and she enjoys sewing, ceramics, crafting of different sorts and camping.

Marie Ringle has been with the State Fund for over nine years. In her current position, she enters medical bills and researches for payee number and bill status. She also helps other departments when needed. Marie has previously worked as a State Fund file clerk, a receptionist for an insurance company, and worked in a fast food restaurant while she went back to school. She is a Helena High graduate and has attended Computer School and medical terminology classes. Marie enjoys participating in outdoor activities with her boyfriend Terry including camping, cross-country skiing, and floating Montana rivers. She also enjoys crocheting and cooking.

Kathy Thompson has been with the State Fund for eight months. Before coming to the State Fund she worked at a local bank as head teller/supervisor. Prior to that Kathy was a secretary/bookkeeper for an apprentice program for operating engineers. She graduated from Helena High and attended the University of Montana for one year. She has two children and four grandchildren and loves to play cribbage, bowl and shoot pool.

Harry Walker has worked for the State Fund for nearly ten years. His duties include research and data entry of physical therapy bills with knowledge of all other types of medical bills. He attended the University of Washington and Billings Vo-tech. Harry likes to jog and keep physically fit. He also likes to play guitar and sing—but most of all he likes to spend time with his son Christopher.

Donna Weber has been at the State Fund for almost nine months. Her duties include researching and data entering medical bills. Before coming to the State Fund, Donna was a price management specialist for ShopKo. She worked for ShopKo for five years and transferred to the Helena store from South Dakota. Donna is a graduate of Mitchell Vo-Tech Business/Office Careers Program in South Dakota. She has one son, Nicholas, and her favorite hobby is spending time with him. Her other family members live in South Dakota so her other hobby is running up her phone bill.

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Stretching for Your Upper Body

The following 5 stretches are recommended for office workers and should be done SLOWLY and SMOOTHLY. They are NOT to be done in a jerky motion. Work within your comfort zone. Stop or back off if you experience discomfort. Remember, the objective is to get blood flowing to areas of the body that experience stress. Take a break every hour or two and get that blood flowing!

If you have or had a previous injury, please consult with your doctor to make sure it is beneficial for you to participate in these stretches.

1 "Pseudo-Walk":

During the first few exercises, walk in place at a slow pace. Alternate lifting your heels off the ground without taking your toes off of the ground. Moving your feet increases circulation, supplying nutrients to the body.

2 Finger Stretches:

Arms are relaxed and hanging down by your side. Slowly alternate making a full fist and then an outstretched hand (fingers extended and spread wide apart). Repeat this open and close motion 10 times while you continue to do the "pseudo-walk".

3 Head Tilts:

Tilt your head to one side as if touching your ear to your shoulder, but don't raise your shoulder to meet your ear. Hold for 3 seconds. Return to middle, briefly, then tilt your head to the other side in the same manner. Hold for 3 seconds. Repeat 4 times. On the last set, hold for 15 seconds each side.

4 Shoulder Stretch:

Put your hands behind your back and interlock your fingers. Lift your arms up behind you until you feel a stretch in your arms, shoulders, or chest. Hold this stretch for 10 seconds. Relax. Repeat 2 times.

5 Hamstring Stretch:

Start in a bent-knee position. Place your feet shoulder-width apart with your heels flat and toes pointed straight. Hold this position for 25 seconds. This tightens your quadriceps while relaxing your hamstrings.

After standing up briefly, slightly bend knees and bend down from the hips and reach towards the floor. Don't bounce. When you feel a mild stretch in the back of your legs, hold for 20 seconds then go down a little bit further and hold for 20 more seconds.

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Letters to the Editor will be accepted from current State Fund employees and are to be submitted to the Editor no later than the last Monday of each month. The employee's name, section and department, and phone number must accompany the letter. Letters deemed inappropriate to the goals and objectives of the *Guardian* or the State Fund will be returned to the author with an explanation of denial.

Letters to the Editor do not reflect the policy or official positions of either the Board of Directors or the management of the State Fund.

Editor, Aidan Myhre, Director, Industry and Consumer Affairs. Managing Editor and Layout, Shawna Swanz, Public Information Specialist. Call 444-5982 with comments or suggested articles for the *Guardian*.

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Message from the President

The time has come to conduct the review of the FY95 Strategic Business Plan. In light of this, I just want to say that the progress and accomplishments of the past year are remarkable!

- reduced injury reporting time
- financial stability/improved reporting
- improved adjuster/claimant contact
- and much more

You have all done a tremendous job accomplishing the goals set forth in last year's plan. Thank you!

As we embark on the FY96 plan I am confident that we will see similar progress and success.

For FY96, the issues have been consolidated and simplified. Our business plan truly reflects our most critical issues—Quality Customer Service and Resource Management.

Although our focus has narrowed, our long, interim and short term goals remain challenging.

With our continued fine efforts, FY96 will bring even more success. I look forward to working with you to make that happen.

Employee of the Month

Congratulations to Jim Worthington—Employee of the Month for May!

Jim is always willing to go the extra mile to meet demands in short time frames. Working in purchasing of all types of material needs for not only each department, but for the State Fund as a whole, he takes the time to research options and price—whatever is needed to help.

He is always courteous, professional, outgoing, and has a warm, friendly attitude—this makes Jim a great co-worker. He provides great internal customer service!

Jim has been at the State Fund for a year. He is married to Kelly and they have a daughter, Taylor, who is 2. Jim was raised in Dillon and has been in Helena for about 5 years. He likes to fish, hunt, camp, and snowmobile.